



Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6095th meeting

Friday, 20 March 2009, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Shalgham	(Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
<i>Members:</i>	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. İlkin
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/132)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) (S/2009/146)

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09-27495 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/132)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) (S/2009/146)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Czech Republic, Malaysia, Norway and Somalia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Omaar (Somalia) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia; His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union; and His Excellency Mr. Samir Hosni, Director of African Administration and the Afro-Arab Cooperation Department of the League of Arab States.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia, document S/2009/132.

Members of the Council also have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008), document S/2009/146.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Ould Abdallah: The purpose of my presentation is to introduce the next steps in the implementation of the Djibouti agreement, an ongoing process, and to explain how I see Somalia's long march back to normality. First I would like to make a few observations, then to outline the importance of the linkages between governance, security and development, and finally to discuss how to make the best use of the first 100 days of the new Government.

A few observations: for years, the situation in Somalia has been a threat to its people, with continued armed confrontation and subsequent anarchy, and a threat to its neighbours, with border insecurity and trafficking of humans, weapons and drugs. A vulnerable State has made the whole region vulnerable. Finally, it has been a threat to the international community, with increasing irregular migration flows, home-grown hard drugs, terrorism and piracy.

To address the complexities in Somalia, a new paradigm, based on the linkages between governance, security and development, is now needed. While the Somali elite — military, business and religious leaders, but also elders and intellectuals — bears most of the blame for the collapse of their nation, the international community cannot shirk its own responsibilities. Today, all of us, Somalis and the international community, should undertake efforts to win each other's hearts and minds. Somalis have to find a way out of the trap, and we do too.

Obviously, there is no possibility of wide-scale recovery and rehabilitation if the internal situation remains volatile. At the same time, without basic investment in development — providing employment for

youth and women and rehabilitating neighbourhoods — criminality will continue to thrive and security will not improve.

A strategy with achievable goals should help stabilize the country. For the next 100 days, these goals should be limited to employment, renovation of infrastructure and humanitarian assistance. Many young people are always available for violent confrontation. A large number of those extremists, who carry out murder under different banners, are generally far more interested in their share of revenues than in ideology. There are plenty of illegitimate ways to make small and large profits in and from Somalia. How can we convince the profit-seekers and spoilers that peace will be more profitable?

Simultaneous assistance to governance, security and development should be delivered. While large resources are available for Somalia, a major problem is their effective and timely disbursement. That issue should be addressed urgently. However, it should not be up to the international community alone to support Somalia. The country has the longest coastline in Africa — 2,300 kilometres — with rich fish resources and promising hydrocarbon deposits. More important, it has an extraordinarily entrepreneurial business community, and its diaspora sends more than \$1 billion home each year. Those advantages should be mobilized for peace, reconstruction and development — not for destruction. Creating insecurity inside the country for 20 years and, now, exposing young members of the diaspora to terrorist activities and suspicion in their new homelands is unpatriotic.

During my first statement before the Council, on 17 December 2007 (see S/PV.5805), I presented three possible courses of action for the United Nations to follow in Somalia. They were: a business-as-usual policy; total withdrawal from the country; and combined, simultaneous, political, security and development undertakings. The Djibouti agreement is the result of the last approach. In that connection, I wish to recognize with thanks the support that I have received from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Union, the European Commission, Norway, the United States, Djibouti and Kenya, to mention only a few, as well as the permanent members of the Security Council, who have been very supportive. The members of the International Contact

Group on Somalia, which I chair, have demonstrated a strong engagement in favour of stability in Somalia.

Today, we need a 100-day assistance programme. The State legitimacy is established and the legality of the new institutions is recognized regionally, internationally and, indeed, by the vast majority of Somalis. The President, the Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and parliament are all back in Mogadishu, a welcome departure from past practices of functioning from outside the capital. Describing Somalia, *The Economist* stated recently that there is a glimmer of hope, and indeed there is a chance for a fresh start.

That new seriousness of purpose invites the international community to back the progress being made through practical actions. Those include, first, immediate support for the new authorities; secondly, immediate diplomatic and financial assistance to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM); thirdly, transparent and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance; fourthly, the matter of individuals on the Security Council sanctions list; fifthly, impunity; and, finally, piracy off the Somali coast.

We should now help Somalis reclaim the future of their country. The new Administration has a convincing legitimacy and is recognized internationally by IGAD, the African Union, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations. There is, therefore, an obligation to respect and cooperate with those new authorities and to do no harm to their institutions and their credibility. They should be consulted on, informed about and associated with all political, economic and humanitarian actions concerning their country. That new approach should put an end to past misunderstandings between some members of the international community and Somalia's central Government. The new Government should also be informed about Somalia's assets held in a number of overseas banks or in accounts managed by international organizations.

Secondly, pending the mobilization of credible funding for AMISOM, the courageous and dedicated African troops and their countries of origin deserve immediate diplomatic recognition and financial support. In that context, I hope that the conference for resource mobilization for AMISOM and the Somali forces, organized in cooperation with the African

Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union and the United Nations within the framework of resolution 1863 (2009), will be successful. The Secretary-General is due to submit a report for a United Nations peacekeeping operation in advance of a Council decision on the issue in June. The integrated planning process to develop the Secretary-General's recommendations is ongoing.

Thirdly, after two decades of armed confrontation, humanitarian assistance is needed more than ever before. While the needs are enormous, Somalia is not to be seen as a purely humanitarian case. A 20-year-long emergency is a contradiction in terms. More has to be done, especially at the political and diplomatic levels, to find a lasting solution. While humanitarian assistance should be provided in close cooperation and consultation with the legitimate Government, it should not and cannot be used as a political tool by any party, be it the Government, the opposition or others.

Fourthly, last year a Somali was taken off the list of the United Nations Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee. I believe that others should qualify when they demonstrate a sincere desire to help the return of peace and stability to their country of origin by severing all links with radical groups.

Finally, the Djibouti Agreement makes provision for justice and reconciliation. Impunity perpetuates violence. The country should address crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by Somalis against Somalis. A national truth and reconciliation commission could be established, and the Security Council may also consider the problem through a commission of inquiry.

Regarding piracy, it is above all a profitable business. It is linked to the failure of the State on land and is its extension offshore. It has to be addressed vigorously to help the security of maritime trade routes. By drawing attention to the plight of Somalis, the international naval presence is a show of solidarity with the country and the whole region. Indeed, to fight piracy is also to fight many criminal activities — illegal fishing, waste dumping and trafficking in humans and drugs. At the same time, there is the need to consolidate cooperative work to help trace the pirates' financial resources. At the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, we plan to do that with our colleagues at the United Nations Office on Drugs

and Crime. Finally, while Somalia's sovereignty and national interests are to be respected, acts of piracy by private individuals or groups can never be justified.

In conclusion, given the long-standing scepticism and diehard habits, the struggle for peace will be long. Therefore, the first priority in Somalia is to liberate the hijacked Somali peace agenda, held hostage for so long. I would argue that with the Djibouti Agreement, the country has passed the crossroads. It is on a one-way street going forward. The price of regression to the conflict is too high for Somalia, the region and, indeed, the international community.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his briefing and his detailed report.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

Mr. Omaar (Somalia): I am pleased to have this opportunity to report recent developments and the significant progress made by the Government of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke. First, however, I wish to thank the Council, the Member States, the Governments, the Secretary-General and the United Nations as a whole for the aid and assistance that they have given to Somalia and the Somali people over the past 18 years. Their support and that of the international community has been crucial for the past efforts for peace in Somalia. We acknowledge and appreciate that, and we now wish to take that forward in partnership with them to re-establish the institutions of the State and to implement the rule of law.

As the Council is aware, the Djibouti peace process delivered a firm platform for a Government of national unity, with the election of our new President on 30 January and his appointment of the Prime Minister on 13 February. One month ago to this day, the Prime Minister announced the new Cabinet, which was sworn into office on 21 February and given an almost unanimous mandate by parliament on the same day. Within a week, the President, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and parliament all returned to Somalia and assumed the seat of government on a permanent basis with the required quorum, and the first Cabinet meeting took place on 28 February. This assumption of

the seat of government is permanent and irreversible, and the business of government is now fully under way from Mogadishu.

Our first and foremost policy is and will remain the establishment of peace and security in Somalia. That can be achieved only through dialogue, negotiation, the will for compromise and reconciliation. The people of Somalia and the international community have paid a high price to reach this point, and we see it as the moment of truth. We, as the Government, and our partners, the international community, now have the responsibility and the opportunity to realize what has eluded us all for 18 years.

Over the past four weeks of its operation, the Government has taken five essential actions to lay the foundations for its programme of peace and reconciliation.

The first was its immediate and irreversible assumption of the seat of government in the capital, Mogadishu.

The second was the integration of the forces of the Transitional Federal Government and of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia into the Joint Security Force. That has been successful and effective in the rebuilding of national security forces, which are essential to the establishment of peace and security within the country and are the means for reconciliation within the priority sector of State institutions.

The third has been the developing mobilization of the Somali people in support of the peace process. This mobilization and motivation among the major stakeholders — including merchants and businessmen, clan elders, religious leaders, women and young people — has gathered such momentum that the peace process is now, in reality, a common property that is being both championed and defended by the Somali people and by communities themselves.

Our fourth initiative has been to re-establish the authority of the State and the rule of law in the economy. That has started with the assumption of full authority over Mogadishu port and airport, which are, respectively, the principal seaport and airport in Somalia. Both have been restructured with new administrations and internationally acceptable operational procedures. They are two new sources of

internal revenue for the Government, which we aim to develop and strengthen.

Our fifth and most recent initiative has been the re-establishment of our dialogue with the international community through the International Contact Group on Somalia, the Arab League and the African Union and through bilateral discussions in the subregion with Kenya, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda, undertaken through presidential visits to those countries over the past 10 days.

The need for peace and the will for liberty to achieve it have shown that, in the end, the voice and the will of the people must prevail. That has been no less inevitable in Somalia than it has been in the history of the world. Today in Somalia there are no warlords; there are no clan wars; there are no political factions holding the country hostage. Some, however, still refuse the offer of peace and dialogue, even when we reconfirm that the Sharia is the source of the law, as it is under the Charter of the Transitional Federal Government, and that it will remain so under the proposed constitution now under preparation. Yet we remain ready to negotiate with them, but we will do so only across the table. The gun must be put away.

We have focused and set our targets on the first 100 days. The Somali people have shown their will for peace, and our responsibility as a Government is to provide credibility, coherence and competence in governance. That can be built only in partnership and collaboration with the international community. The society of States that is represented by the United Nations must put the past and its disappointments behind it. We are at a landmark moment, and we cannot afford to fail. We therefore ask you, the member Governments, and other multilateral institutions to support the Government with urgent and immediate action in the following areas.

The first is security stabilization. The Government's security and peacekeeping strategy is based on the twin pillars of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Joint Security Force of the Government. With regard to AMISOM, we have requested from the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Governments of Burundi and Uganda that three additional battalions be sent to Somalia on an urgent basis. That needs to be undertaken immediately, with improved equipment, logistics and medical facilities.

With regard to the Joint Security Force, it has not been adequately funded, resourced or equipped thus far, yet it is AMISOM's essential partner for peacekeeping. Without an operational Joint Security Force on the Somali side, AMISOM and the peacekeeping mission will be hampered for lack of a national partner force that will, in time, take on the responsibility for security and stability.

As for the United Nations peacekeeping force, we welcome and support the commitment to establish such a force for Somalia, and we confirm that a significant number of the benchmarks detailed in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/132) are already in place.

With respect to the pledging conference set for 22 April, it is most crucial to resource the security sector as a whole, as detailed earlier. Without such resources, visible and effective demonstration of the authority of the State and the rule of law will not be achieved and peace will not be secured.

Finally, with regard to the arms embargo in the security sector, if the Joint Security Force is to be equipped by the international community, to partner with AMISOM and to secure peace, the embargo on the Government must be readdressed.

The second area concerns, in terms of our requirements, cooperation with the Government and capacity-building. The peace process and the achievements so far have been undertaken in partnership with the international community. Our common objectives, and the investments made, have been to assist the Somali people to establish effective institutions of State and the rule of law. The Government of national unity that is now in place has been recognized by the international community. Yet the need to work with the organs of the Government — however fragile — and to respect its dignity and sovereignty must be highlighted. We all need to make adjustments in attitudes and in operational habits and procedures.

Those adjustments must be telescoped into the resourcing of capacity-building for Government institutions. Personnel in the ministries and departments of the Government need training and provision of expertise to re-establish effective operations for the delivery of public services and administrative governance at both the federal and local levels.

With regard to humanitarian aid, as confirmed by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2009/132), more than 3 million people will need humanitarian assistance due to both displacement and drought. Of that total, 580,000 are internally displaced people in the vicinity of Mogadishu. This is a danger to human life that can be averted. It is also a danger to the peace and stability that we all seek. The fruits of peace must show in the lives of the displaced and the victims of drought. They need the Council to act, as they deserve its assistance.

With regard to piracy, as stated by the Secretary-General, defeating piracy in Somalia requires the restoration of the rule of law. As the origin and base of piracy is on land, defeating piracy can only be done in partnership with the Government. In 2008, 111 piracy attacks occurred, and in 2009, seven attacks have occurred already. For our part, we are ready, willing and able to integrate the required actions against piracy into the twin pillars of our security development and stabilization programme, as detailed earlier. We look to the international community for an immediate, agreed plan for implementation.

In Somalia, the momentum for peace has created a new momentum. Somalia is no longer caught in the stalemate of conflict between factions of approximately equal weight. This momentum is led by the Government. We have gained credibility with the Somali people. We are establishing coherence through the State institutions, which we need to be empowered. Most of all, however, we need the resources for the competence needed for governance.

I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to address the Council.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, for his statement.

In view of the fact that the African Union is an important partner of the United Nations in the peace process in Somalia and that it has a peacekeeping mission there, and since the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, is with us today, he will be given the floor under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. The information he will be presenting to us is complementary to what the representative of the Secretary-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia have provided. I therefore propose that we give the floor to Mr. Lamamra to make a statement

before members of the Council. This is an exceptional proposal and should not be construed as setting a precedent in any way. Are there any objections?

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): Given the very important relations that we, as France and as the Security Council, have with the African Union, it is obvious that it is entirely appropriate to give due consideration to the statements by representatives of the African Union. Given our long-standing friendly relations with Commissioner Lamamra, we of course do not want to keep him from speaking.

However, I must express publicly my reservations concerning the motivation behind this decision. Those reasons were made known to me, and it was with reservations that I accepted the decision, which was taken because of scheduling constraints on the part of the Commissioner, who wished to address the Council before leaving New York. Under these circumstances, France will, of course, help the Commissioner address the Council in the way that he has worked out.

However, if it is because this is a subject that concerns the African Union that the floor will be given to a regional organization before it is given to the Security Council, I will have to express my very serious reservations. That does not seem to be in accordance with, in particular, the discussions that we held in this very Chamber a few days ago on relations between the African Union and the Security Council.

Once again, if it is a matter of scheduling constraints, it is with great pleasure that I would wish to help our friend Mr. Lamamra get out of this difficult situation. Under those circumstances, we have no objections.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): If there are no further comments it is so decided.

I now invite Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security for the African Union, to take a seat at the Council table, and I give him the floor.

Mr. Lamamra (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you, Mr. President, for your understanding and for your assistance in making it possible for the African Union to address the Council. This is very important for the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations.

(*spoke in English*)

I should like to thank the Council for this opportunity to address it on this very important issue of Somalia.

Somalia has witnessed significant progress since the beginning of the year. Following the resignation of President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed on 29 December 2008, a number of positive developments took place in the country. First, Somali stakeholders, acting in accordance with the decisions reached within the context of the Djibouti process, expanded the Transitional Federal Parliament to accommodate the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia and other stakeholders, including civil society.

On 30 January 2009, the expanded parliament proceeded, in a free and fair manner, to elect a new President in the person of His Excellency Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. This election, coupled with the expansion of the parliament, crowned the process initiated by the signing of the Djibouti agreement of 19 August 2008. Later, on 13 February, the newly elected President appointed His Excellency Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke as the new Prime Minister, and a 36-member national unity cabinet was thereafter constituted. The Government and other transitional institutions have since relocated to Mogadishu.

It is worth noting that the new President, upon assumption of duty, expressed his commitment to work towards effective reconciliation among the Somali people and bring on board those elements that are still outside the peace process. He also stressed the intention of his Government to promote close cooperation with Somalia's neighbours. As the Council is aware, the Djibouti agreement was conducted under the auspices of the United Nations, with the active support of the African Union and other international partners. I should like to underscore the need for sustained United Nations engagement in the implementation of the agreement as a critical part of the effort to promote the success of the peace and reconciliation process.

The African Union (AU) appreciates the Security Council's continued attention in addressing the threats posed by piracy off the coast of Somalia and beyond. The effective actions that are being taken should directly or indirectly assist in promoting much-needed overall security for Somalia and for the whole region.

Indeed, the security situation in Somalia, and in Mogadishu in particular, remains very volatile. In

efforts to address the heightened level of insecurity, notably the attacks directed at the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), President Sheikh Sharif met with representatives of a number of armed opposition groups in a bid to open dialogue with them. The President also established a national security committee to oversee efforts to improve security and broaden reconciliation. Furthermore, a number of religious clerics, traditional leaders, businessmen and the influential Hawiye Cultural and Unity Council have also intervened and prevailed on some of the groups concerned to halt their attacks on AMISOM. That has resulted in a form of cessation of hostilities, which became effective on 1 March.

I should stress that AMISOM is working closely with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to operationalize the Somali Joint Security Force. At the moment, AMISOM is providing food rations to the first batch of recruited TFG/ARS forces. Considering the need to fully equip the Somali Joint Security Force with the requisite weapons and ammunition, the AU has been requested by the Transitional Federal Government to work with the Security Council and take advantage of the exemption to the arms embargo imposed on the country to help the Government acquire arms for its forces.

The humanitarian situation remains particularly difficult. In fact, considerable progress recorded earlier with the return of a number of internally displaced persons and some refugees to Mogadishu, has been reversed, as a number of Mogadishu residents have again been forced out as a result of continued fighting between various armed elements and TFG forces.

For its part, AMISOM continues to provide basic humanitarian relief to local communities. The AMISOM Level I hospital provides medical care to a considerable number of Somalis, while AMISOM water tankers supply portable water to communities around the camps and beyond.

At this juncture, I should like to inform the Council that the AU continues to pursue efforts to enhance AMISOM. The Mission's current strength is 3,450, consisting of two battalions each from Burundi and Uganda, against an authorized strength of 8,000. Steps are under way to deploy, in a matter of days, one additional battalion pledged by Uganda, while consultations continue with Burundi as to the appropriate timing for the deployment of the third

battalion pledged by the Burundian Government. The African Union Commission is also engaging other member States to secure additional troops, and I should like to note the contribution of the Government of Algeria in providing airlifts for the rotation of the Burundi contingent units and for the deployment of the third Ugandan battalion at no cost to the AU.

In addition, efforts continue to be made to complete the deployment of the police component of AMISOM as part of the efforts to train, mentor, restructure and reorganize the Somali police. The AU and the United Nations Development Programme are currently developing an integrated support plan for the Somali Police Force, and I would like to seize this opportunity to once again extend the African Union's sincere appreciation to its bilateral and multilateral partners who are providing financial and logistical support to AMISOM.

It is in this light that the AU welcomes Security Council resolution 1863 (2009), adopted on 16 January 2009, in which the Council expressed its intent to consider establishing a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia as a follow-on force to AMISOM, subject to a further decision by 1 June 2009. In this resolution, the Council also approved the proposals made by the Secretary-General on 19 December 2008, for a logistical package to support AMISOM with equipment and services, as well as the establishment of a trust fund to provide financial support to AMISOM to assist in the re-establishment, training, and retention of an all-inclusive Somali security force.

I therefore call upon the Council to build on its position and take the decision needed to deploy a follow-on peacekeeping operation to take over from AMISOM, in view of the fact that, on 11 March 2009, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union renewed the mandate of AMISOM for another three months, in anticipation of the Security Council decision to deploy a follow-on peacekeeping force.

Equally important is the need to urgently implement the decision by the United Nations to provide a logistical support package to AMISOM. In this respect, I look forward to the General Assembly's early budgetary approval of the elements of the support package to be provided through United Nations-assessed contributions. I therefore call on States Members of the United Nations to generously contribute to the envisaged United Nations trust fund

that will provide financial and material support to AMISOM until a United Nations peacekeeping operation is deployed, and to assist in building Somali institutions for security and rule of law.

In conclusion, I should like to express appreciation once again to all partners that have so far extended support to AMISOM both bilaterally and multilaterally. We believe that if we collectively continue to take correct and decisive measures, we will ensure that the current window of opportunity created in Somalia will not have been lost.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Lamamra, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by extending a particularly warm welcome to the Foreign Minister of Somalia on his first appearance at this Council. He and his Government are very welcome at our deliberations, and we congratulate him on his appointment. We also thank him for his well-considered, thorough and, if I may say so, well-judged statement. Of course, we also welcome our old friend, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Lamamra, whom we have just heard speaking.

All speakers have pointed to the encouraging developments of the last several months. They did not emphasize one of them, which was the smooth withdrawal of Ethiopian forces at the beginning of this year, but we can all recognize that that was an important step, as were, of course, the election of President Sharif, the formation of a new transitional Government and, in particular, the decision, highlighted by the Foreign Minister, to base the new Government in Mogadishu. President Sharif has also shown much personal courage in reaching out to the different factions in Somalia in an effort to establish political reconciliation, and in that he has our full support.

While welcoming the progress that has been made, we should not underestimate the scale or complexity of the challenges that Somalia continues to face. There are four particular areas where progress is urgently needed and which we believe should be the focus of the Council's attention. The first is tackling the humanitarian crisis. More than 3 million people need assistance in Somalia. The international community must continue to provide aid and support the Government in delivering basic security,

employment and services, and the new Government needs to develop its own revenue streams and set its budget priorities.

Secondly, there is the political track. We need Somali solutions to Somali problems, and the Djibouti process has given us a very good start on that. The international community must continue to support the new Government and also give that Government the space to act and to pursue reconciliation politically. Over time, the new Government will need to establish wider justice and reconciliation processes, helping to create an environment in which different groups can live together.

I encourage the United Nations Political Office and other United Nations staff to continue to work with President Sharif's Government and to make regular visits to Mogadishu.

Thirdly, we need to create a secure environment in which the new Government can work. Some good work has been done, including by the United Nations Development Programme, in training the Somali police. There is still much to be done in strengthening the joint security forces. We warmly welcome their creation; this is the only long-term solution. We should all consider how we can best help.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) continues to play a critical role, by providing security in the centre of Mogadishu, key installations there, providing a base for President Sharif's Government to operate in the capital. I pay tribute to our brothers from Uganda and Burundi for their continuing commitment to this difficult operation.

I would like to announce today that the United Kingdom will be giving this month an additional £10 million to the United Nations AMISOM trust fund. That is in addition to the £5 million that we have already given directly to the African Union for AMISOM. We encourage others also to contribute.

The Council will need to return in May to the issue of a possible United Nations peacekeeping operation. As the Secretary-General says in his current report, there remains uncertainty about whether a classic United Nations peacekeeping operation is the right tool to support the political process in Somalia (S/2009/132). We look forward to his next report in a month or so.

The fourth area we need to pay attention to is piracy. We need to continue to work to ensure that security exists on Somalia's seas as well as on its land. We have to tackle both piracy at sea and its root causes on the land. We welcome the work of the Contact Group and agree with the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report, particularly on developing regional capability. On the operational front, the United Kingdom is providing the commander and the headquarters of the European Union naval mission off the coast of Somalia. We look forward to continued progress in tackling this problem.

Recent developments in Somalia give us some grounds for cautious optimism. This is a country that has endured almost 20 years of conflict and humanitarian tragedy. The challenges that President Sharif and his Government will face in the coming months remain immense and we must urgently provide practical support to the new Government, as well as to AMISOM, if we are to help bring about the stability and security that the people of Somalia deserve.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the briefing by Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and the statements of Mr. Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and Ambassador Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, who join the Council today.

My delegation shares the view of the Special Representative on what has been called the long march of Somalia towards stability, taking into account both the progress made in just a few weeks and the many remaining challenges. In the light of the success of the presidential elections held on 30 January in Djibouti, it is important for the international community to redouble its efforts to complete the establishment of the Somali State and its institutions, in close coordination with the new Government of Somalia, the United Nations, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and regional organizations.

In Mexico's view, concrete action in the following areas is of priority. First, it is fundamentally important that the Djibouti agreement, signed in 2008 between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, continue to be the operative mechanism to promote the process of national peace and reconciliation. The new President has demonstrated his commitment to international

efforts to establish peace. An example is the agreement reached with some insurgent groups to declare a truce and proclaim Islamic law, sharia. However, it is worrying that the most extremist groups remain on the sidelines of dialogue, which threatens the fragile progress achieved. The President must therefore continue his efforts to bring about the full implementation of the agreement in order to promote inclusive political dialogue to stabilize the country.

Secondly, it is essential that the new Government focus its efforts on a complete reform of the security sector — based upon the recommendations of the technical assessment mission which visited Addis Ababa and Nairobi last January — as a useful starting point to achieve progress in strengthening the Somali police force with the support of the Joint Security Committee and the Joint Security Force.

Concrete progress must also be promoted with regard to the justice system and to programmes to combat national and regional arms trafficking. That must be linked to actions to bring about the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants as well as demining activities with United Nations support. The responsibility of the African Union here is essential, and close cooperation and coordination with regional bodies will facilitate the creation of strategies to consolidate the rule of law and bring about full compliance with international law as a basis for socio-economic development.

Thirdly, the Security Council must bring about the active participation of regional bodies and mechanisms during discussions on the issue. Exchange of information and points of view with groups such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the International Contact Group on Somalia can provide valuable contributions to such discussions.

Fourthly, with regard to human rights, the enlarged police force must ensure full observance of human rights and adopt measures to protect the civilian population and ensure those responsible for violations be held accountable for the deaths of civilians, whether resulting from crossfire incidents, targeted assassinations or the murder of judges, as such acts foster impunity and undermine the judicial system.

Mexico also condemns the attacks against humanitarian workers, which have caused a reduction in humanitarian aid and significantly affected vulnerable groups, in particular women and children.

Measures must also be taken to address the alarming recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. Here, we acknowledge the significant role played by the Human Rights Unit of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia. We reiterate how important it is for that Office to continue its work in coordination with the new Government and AMISOM.

With regard to international humanitarian law, Mexico calls upon the parties to the conflict to observe its provisions and principles, to cease attacks immediately and to avoid situations where civilians may be affected.

It is also essential that the new Somali Government fulfil the measures of the sanctions Committee, as a complementary measure to the endeavours to bring about peace and security in the region.

With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on piracy in Somalia (S/2009/146), we acknowledge that piracy is one of the consequences of the serious instability affecting the country. That is why we agree with the Secretary-General on the importance of following an integrated approach to achieve stability in the region.

Mexico condemns acts of piracy, armed robbery and violent acts against the safety of navigation in the Gulf of Aden and believes that their perpetrators must be brought to justice under the applicable legal system.

Likewise, Mexico supports the validity, relevance and applicability of existing international law to address the threat represented by acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia. In that regard, we recognize the importance of Security Council resolutions 1816 (2008) and 1846 (2008), which authorize, subject to certain conditions, entry into Somalia's territorial waters, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

I wish to emphasize that in Mexico's view — as the texts of the aforementioned resolutions explicitly indicate — the powers granted to the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter are the legal basis that permits States to enter Somalia's territorial waters for the purpose of suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea and to employ, in Somalia's territorial waters, in a manner consistent with actions permitted on the high seas with respect to piracy under relevant international law all necessary measures to counter acts of piracy and armed robbery.

In that sense, in both resolutions, the Security Council, having determined the situation to be one that threatens international peace and security, decided on the measures necessary to maintain or re-establish that peace and security. It is important also to recall that both resolutions explicitly establish that the authorizations granted are not considered precedents in customary international law. In our view, that is recognition of the exceptional nature of the authorized actions and of the Security Council acting pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter. With that understanding, Mexico wishes to review its support for the initiatives undertaken by the International Maritime Organization and the Security Council to counter this threat in a coordinated and consistent way.

Lastly, my delegation supports the work of the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, set up pursuant to resolution 1851 (2008), and recognizes the importance of the multinational operations taking place off the coast of Somalia to combat piracy.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abadallah for his briefing on the situation in Somalia and express our appreciation for the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia. We also thank Commissioner Lamamra for his very informative statement.

Reading the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/132), we can only conclude that the general situation in Somalia is still a source of great concern, notwithstanding the significant progress that has been recorded, in particular since the signing of the Djibouti agreement. That is certainly true, especially with regard to the current security situation.

However, in our opinion, we find ourselves today in the presence of a new and determined Somalia, with a Government based in Mogadishu and a clear overall vision of how to emerge from the situation. That is why, following the example of the meeting of heads of State of the African Union, we should welcome the new Government and, above all, help provide it with all necessary assistance for it to meet its obligations. More precisely, we would like to urge the international community to continue to assist the parties, in particular the new authorities, to help them bolster their efforts to strengthen political cooperation and to integrate, restructure and train the Somali Police Force.

As we are aware of the difficulties linked to the scope of the task, it is only right that we congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the country team, all United Nations agencies and Somalia's bilateral partners for their tireless efforts. We support the conclusions of the International Contact Group on Somalia, which met on 16 December 2008, on the need to immediately strengthen the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Despite positive political progress, the security situation has greatly deteriorated, particularly since the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops. Both in Mogadishu and in other areas, a stronger presence of militias and other insurgent forces has spread violence throughout the country. There are more and more victims, both within the civilian population and among humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel.

Given that fragile security situation, we think that the security aspect of the Djibouti agreement must be rapidly implemented, in particular with regard to the Joint Security Committee, the Joint Security Force and the Somali Police Force. We believe that sustained support to those three security bodies is the first step that the international community must take to help Somalia today. That will enable the authorities to strengthen their own security, to protect the civilians and to secure the supply of humanitarian assistance.

Here, we would like to congratulate Burundi and Uganda for their commitment and their spirit of sacrifice, which was further affirmed by their respective decisions to deploy an additional battalion each to strengthen AMISOM. Saying that, we strongly condemn the attacks against AMISOM, and we reiterate our commitment to the security and integrity of the African force. The recent murderous attacks of which AMISOM soldiers were victims raise the urgent issue of strengthening that Mission.

My delegation believes that at this stage of the developing situation, we should attach particular importance to the strengthening of AMISOM, with a view to a future deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, as recommended by resolution 1863 (2009). AMISOM represents the achievement upon which the United Nations can build a future international presence in Somalia and must be strengthened as rapidly as possible and brought up to United Nations standards.

We therefore congratulate the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for its diligence and its comprehensive evaluation of the needs of AMISOM. The proposals and recommendations made there are, in our opinion, realistic, given that the analysis by the technical assessment mission concluded that the existing logistical support to AMISOM consists of basic equipment and services that do not meet United Nations standards.

The international community must therefore firmly support the Secretary-General's plans and make every effort for their success. In that regard, we await with interest the results of the donor conference to be held on 22 April in Brussels.

The already deplorable humanitarian situation runs the risk of worsening, given the drought in certain regions. Moreover, the slowing down of humanitarian operations owing to the insecurity is an issue that must be dealt with quickly, at a time when displaced persons are gradually returning to Mogadishu, a city that lacks basic infrastructure, drinking water and health services. Moreover, the civilian population remains exposed to the threat of unexploded ordnance and mines. Burkina Faso condemns violence against humanitarian personnel. We congratulate the humanitarian agencies on their efforts and encourage them to pursue their activities, despite those difficult conditions.

Burkina Faso firmly believes in the possibility of a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Somali crisis. The country's political actors have made significant progress and displayed a resolve that the Secretary-General himself describes as encouraging. That is why we urge the international community to overcome its hesitations and to increase its assistance with a view to the development and strengthening of Somalia's new institutions.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I, too, would like to welcome Foreign Minister Omaar to the Council and to thank him for his comments. My Government congratulates him and other members of the unity Government and assures them of our cooperation and support. I would also like to welcome Special Representative Ould Abdallah and to thank him for his briefing today.

Recent events present an opportunity to make real progress in Somalia. We welcome the election of President Sharif and the unity Government's move to

Mogadishu. We must support the Somali people so that they can take advantage of this opening.

We remain encouraged by the political progress made under the Djibouti agreement. My Government strongly supports President Sharif's efforts to encourage parties that are still outside the Djibouti process to join him in order to rebuild their troubled country.

In that spirit, we urge all groups that have yet to lay down their arms and join the peace and reconciliation process to do so. Unfortunately, the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab has failed to join that process, vowing instead not only to target the new Government but also to continue its campaign against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and humanitarian non-governmental organizations.

At the same time, Eritrea continues to provide financial, logistical and political backing to Al-Shabaab and other extremists and has issued a formal statement rejecting the new Somali Government. We condemn those actions by Al-Shabaab and Eritrea. They serve only to prolong the conflict in Somalia and cannot be tolerated.

We highly commend the brave troops from Burundi and Uganda serving in AMISOM, who continue to operate under difficult conditions. They are doing crucial work in securing key infrastructure and allowing for the delivery of humanitarian aid, and they deserve our support. The United States, for its part, has provided logistical assistance to AMISOM totalling more than \$100 million since 2007. We urge African Union member States that have pledged to provide troops to AMISOM to arrange to deploy them soon, and we strongly urge United Nations Member States to support AMISOM. Of course, Somalia must begin to provide for its own security, and we should consider ways to assist in the development of a Somali security sector.

The Council has made significant efforts to address the problem of piracy off the Somali coast. The United States is encouraged by the international community's response. On any given day, ships from 15 to 20 different countries are now patrolling those waters. My Government also believes that the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia is proving to be an effective coordinating mechanism, and we look forward to the third meeting of that Group. We also commend the Government of Kenya for offering to

prosecute suspected pirates captured by the international community. We urge all States — especially those directly harmed by piracy — to help the Kenyan Government manage the logistical and financial challenges of prosecuting suspected pirates. That is a burden that should not fall upon the shoulders of Kenya and its neighbours alone.

Finally, let me thank the staff of the United Nations agencies and aid groups that have provided needed assistance to the Somali people under very difficult and dangerous circumstances. We strongly condemn those who impede the delivery of needed assistance through attacks against aid workers and AMISOM troops.

Progress in Somalia will not come easily. The Secretary-General's upcoming donors conference presents us with an opportunity to support the Somalis during this critical period. Let us take advantage of it.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, wish to thank previous speakers, in particular Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia; Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia; and Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

The Czech Presidency of the European Union will be taking the floor shortly, and I obviously support the statement that will be made.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/132) and the presentations that we have just heard confirm that a positive dynamic has begun in Somalia. The expansion of parliament, the election of a President, the formation of a unity Government and the inclusive dialogue begun with all parties by the new Somali President to urge them to join the Djibouti process are all positive political signals. Moreover, the Secretary-General's report indicates the initial return of internally displaced persons to Mogadishu. That is also a sign of confidence.

In addition, France highlights the fact that the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops has not created a security vacuum. In the end, that has not benefited the most radical groups, instead making it possible to marginalize them by removing their main argument for continuing the violence. Somalis should be congratulated on this progress towards peace and reconciliation. Congratulations go also to the Special

Representative of the Secretary-General and, of course, to his team on their tireless efforts vis-à-vis the parties.

However, every day that passes reminds us of the extreme fragility of the situation. The humanitarian situation remains very bad, with more than 3 million people dependent on international aid and hundreds of thousands still on the road to Afgooye. The conditions are all the harsher because humanitarian workers are being targeted, in constant violation of international humanitarian law: in 2008, 34 were killed and 26 abducted; since the beginning of this year, three World Food Programme workers have been killed and four briefly kidnapped. In Mogadishu itself, attacks continue against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We have, in this Chamber, condemned the deadly attack of 25 February against AMISOM soldiers. Two days ago, another soldier was killed and three others were wounded.

In the light of that situation, the international community obviously has an essential role to play. First, we must provide full political support to the Somali authorities and encourage them to continue their efforts to achieve reconciliation and dialogue among all parties. We must also support the establishment of a robust, well-equipped and trained Joint Security Force and a professional police force. It is important to reduce insecurity by directly controlling the essential areas of the city of Mogadishu so that the Government can establish its authority in Somalia and make a real change in people's lives.

In parallel, we must strengthen the AMISOM forces, who have fulfilled their mission with great courage. Here, on behalf of France, I should like to pay tribute to Burundi and Uganda for their actions and to the African Union for its efforts to enable AMISOM to reach full deployment.

Strengthening AMISOM requires additional financial resources. Many donors already provide significant aid to Somalia and AMISOM — in particular the European Union, the African Union's leading financial partner, including through the African Peace Facility. France has assisted in the training of four AMISOM contingents, and French officers are currently in Uganda to help the parties prepare a Ugandan contingent.

The Security Council, through resolution 1863 (2009), has taken the decisions necessary to ensure that the United Nations can provide a logistical support

package to AMISOM and establish a special trust fund, making it possible to find additional resources to support AMISOM and strengthen the Somali security forces. The Secretary-General has taken an emergency measure by making available \$50 million. The first ships are beginning to arrive in Mogadishu. By the end of this month, the General Assembly will debate an initial instalment of funding. We hope that the donors conference will be held soon.

The implementation of resolution 1863 (2009) is a difficult task. Indeed, we must act swiftly and pragmatically, first focusing on the logistical package, a concrete measure that can be implemented quickly so that AMISOM can make an immediate difference.

I should like to stress that the duty of the international community is not merely to deal with security issues. In addition to the mechanism of individual sanctions available to the Council, the fight against impunity is an essential aspect that we must not neglect, because the culture of impunity prevailing in Somalia is a major obstacle on the path of peace. France fully supports the approach of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in that regard.

Like some previous speakers, I should also like to recall that, on more than one occasion last year, the Security Council discussed the possible establishment of a peacekeeping operation. We will resume that discussion on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General that is expected in mid-April. But we must not lose sight of the fact that, in the interests of the Somali people, what is important is a full and swift implementation of resolution 1863 (2009).

This means that combating piracy is all the more necessary. Since the first operation to protect World Food Programme (WFP) vessels undertaken by France in November 2007, the fight against piracy has greatly expanded. The European Union, together with many other international partners, is playing a major role, through its Operation Atalanta, to secure the supplies on which so many Somalis depend. Operation Atalanta has allowed the secure transportation of more than 100,000 tons of food aid. The European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy has expressed his support for the protection of United Nations convoys.

It is on the ground in Somalia that the root causes of piracy must be resolved, but the fight against piracy is also a matter of urgency. We welcome the fact that

so many nations and organizations are participating in this fight. Food deliveries by WFP quadrupled between 2007 and 2008.

I would like once again to express our full support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I would like to reiterate to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia that he can fully count on France to help his Government to respond to, as he so eloquently stated, the need for peace and the will for liberty that motivates his people.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his statement. We acknowledge, as stated in his briefing that significant progress has been made recently in the political process in Somalia. We have also witnessed very proactive efforts by the new President, Prime Minister and cabinet members in urging opposition groups to participate in the peace process.

However, the prospects for realizing a more inclusive peace process remain dim. Hostilities against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) continued to be carried out by rebel groups. The international community must continue to support the efforts of the new Government to promote an inclusive political process.

A major area of concern is the unstable security situation. The attack on AMISOM in February resulted in the loss of 11 Burundian soldiers, and recently four United Nations aid workers were abducted and subsequently released. In these difficult circumstances, AMISOM continues to secure strategic installations in cooperation with the joint security forces. Japan appreciates and commends the troop-contributing countries Burundi and Uganda for their important role in the Mission.

The troop-contributing countries need every support in terms of logistics, training and equipment. It is important that the United Nations logistical package for AMISOM, proposed in the letter by the Secretary-General dated 19 December 2008 (S/2008/804), be speedily approved in accordance with the relevant United Nations rules and procedures, with adequate oversight and transparency.

An international donors conference will be organized to seek support for AMISOM and for the capacity-building of Somali institutions, in accordance with resolution 1863 (2009). Building the capacity of

Somali security institutions, including the joint security forces, is essential for stabilizing the security situation. Given the difficult situation on the ground, it is important for the international community to formulate the best possible way to assist Somali people in pursuing both a quick response and accountability at the same time. Japan, for its part, has provided assistance for humanitarian needs and security sector enhancement in an amount totalling \$64.5 million over the past two years.

Acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia pose a threat to the international community, seriously affecting safe passage and therefore requiring urgent action. In terms of the efforts of the international community, just a week ago, on 13 March 2009, the Japanese Government approved the deployment of Japan Self-Defence Forces to take measures against acts of piracy at sea off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, in accordance with provisions of the existing law allowing maritime security operations on an emergency basis. Two destroyer ships have departed from Japan on this mission. The Japanese Government has also submitted a new draft law on the penalization of acts of piracy and measures against acts of piracy for approval by our Diet.

As was discussed in the series of meetings of the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, it is important to strengthen partnerships, including through United Nations efforts for information sharing, in order to improve coordination between the various activities of Member States and the countries in the region. Japan will continue its active participation in the coordinated measures to address Somali piracy issues, drawing on its experience in Asia, such as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships in Asia.

Finally, we agree with the Secretary-General that it is important to take a multi-faceted approach to resolving the unstable situation in Somalia. The members of the transitional parliament have been moving back to the capital. The integrated approach requires a truly inclusive political process that incorporates various opposition groups, clan leaders, civil society and other relevant stakeholders for nation-building.

It will also be essential to assist institution-building in Somalia, such as efforts to strengthen governing capacity and infrastructure, for the sake of

long-term stability. The international community must strengthen cooperation and interaction with Somalia, and we should mobilize the necessary support and resources.

As for the future transition of AMISOM to a United Nations peacekeeping operation, Japan looks forward to examining the report of the Secretary-General that is due by 15 April in order to determine the most appropriate course of action. We hope to receive a detailed and realistic assessment from the Secretary-General on the security and political situation on the ground.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his presentation and for the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/132) and on ensuring long-term security of navigation off the Somali coast (S/2009/146), prepared pursuant to resolution 1846 (2008), on piracy.

We too are grateful for the detailed briefing and the assessments provided.

We listened carefully to the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar. We welcome the recent positive political developments in Somalia, the peaceful transition of power, the election by the expanded Transitional Federal Parliament of the new President of the Republic, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the appointment of the Prime Minister and the formation of the Government. We expect that the new President will be able to unite the forces from all sides in the Somali conflict in order to provide for an operational Government, move ahead with the consolidation of society and establish the rule of law and a lasting peace in the country.

We take note of and support the mediation efforts in this direction, by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. Ould Abdallah. We take note of the findings of the technical assessment mission, set out in the report of the Secretary-General, which include, in particular, the proposal made with respect to the logistical support package for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We assume that these proposals worked out detail by the relevant General Assembly bodies, taking into account established budget procedures.

With respect to the prospects of deploying a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, the future decision of the Council in this area will depend to a large extent on the commitment to peace of the Somalis themselves, on a substantial improvement in the security situation and on serious progress towards a political settlement. These basic preconditions are not yet in place. However, we believe that a possible United Nations operation in Somalia should be further planned, and that the modalities of the transformation of AMISOM — whose work we support — into such an operation should be further defined.

We will be expecting the corresponding conclusions and proposals of the Secretary-General in his April report pursuant to resolution 1863 (2009). That resolution provides for an increase in international assistance to the Somali peace process. Success in this area will contribute to the solution of the whole complex of problems, including that of eradicating piracy off the Somali coast. The report of the Secretary-General on this issue (S/2009/146) indeed reflects the efforts by the international community to more effectively combat piracy and armed robbery at sea in this region. We urge the Secretary-General to continue his active work in this area.

International commitments made in the Security Council have already brought results. However, we are still far from being able to see the reversal of the negative trends with respect to the acts of piracy off the shores of Somalia. We believe that a multidimensional approach to the problem of piracy is required. We see the road to a long-term solution in moving the Djibouti peace process forward to ensure order and security in the country and to overcome the socio-economic factors that encourage the growth of piracy. Moreover, we must do everything possible to strengthen the capacities of the Somali Government itself, for in the last analysis, the success of the fight against piracy depends on the success of the Government.

A special role in establishing conditions for effectively combating piracy should be played by the Governments of the region. We therefore believe that we should support such regional initiatives as the adoption in Djibouti in January of a code of conduct to combat piracy along the Horn of Africa. Solving the problem includes the development of a single legal basis for the arrest and prosecution of pirates, thus

facilitating the fight against piracy along the Somali coast.

The Russian Federation is continuing to make effective contributions to international anti-piracy actions and is actively participating in the implementation of appropriate initiatives, in particular in the framework of the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia. Ships of the Russian naval fleet are carrying out the task of ensuring the safety of navigation and of other types of maritime economic activities off the coast of Somalia. That task is carried out in coordination with the naval fleets of China, France, India and the United States, and with the naval fleet of the European Union and NATO's Combined Task Force-151. Since October 2008, more than 80 Russian and other vessels have been escorted, and four attempts by pirates to capture merchant ships have been averted. We are committed to working closely with interested parties on all aspects of the problem.

In concluding, I wish the people and the Government of Somalia progress in exiting this crisis, which has lasted too long. Russia will assist them in finding solutions.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I join other colleagues in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his briefing. I also wish to welcome the Foreign Minister of Somalia and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Mr. Larnamra, and thank them for their briefings.

We are happy that the Minister for Foreign Affairs could make it to New York to share with us the latest developments in Somalia. The challenges facing Somalia within the country are many and indeed pressing. The conflict in Somalia has also had negative consequences for the region in terms of refugees, piracy and proliferation of small arms, as well as fostering a breeding ground for terror activities.

We are therefore encouraged that the recent positive political developments, particularly in regard to the implementation of the Djibouti peace agreement, point to a new and positive direction in Somalia. These developments have in the last couple of months included the expansion of the parliament, the election of President Ahmed, the appointment of Prime Minister Sharmarke and the formation of a Government of national unity. All of these developments provide a unique opportunity for peace and stability in Somalia.

Uganda therefore welcomes the efforts of President Ahmed and his Government in reaching out to various groups and for being accommodative of different opinions. The decision to move the seat of government to Mogadishu and the Government's announcement of four priority areas where minimum recovery could be expected within the first hundred days — security and reconciliation, humanitarian access, institutional capacity-building, and management of transitional arrangements — are bold and commendable. In view of that, we call upon all parties to respond positively to the President's initiatives and join the political process so that the urgent task of rebuilding the country can begin in earnest.

We commend the international community for the support that it has extended to the Somali people in facilitating negotiations in their quest for peace. In this regard, I want once again to salute the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his pivotal role in the Djibouti peace process.

While we recognize these positive developments and thank all who have facilitated the process, we remain fully aware that the situation in Somalia is still fragile and that there are some groups that are still bent on taking the path of violence and who continue to mount attacks in different parts of the country. The latest attack on the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which killed a Ugandan army officer, is one such desperate and condemnable act. Besides destabilizing the country and delaying the return to normalcy, these attacks also impede the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance to ordinary citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. We therefore condemn the targeting of humanitarian personnel and all acts of impunity, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Like many of those who have spoken before us, we are deeply disturbed by piracy off the coast of Somalia. Not only does it impede the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy, it also interferes with international trade and raises shipping costs. Therefore it has a negative impact on economic development in the region and worsens the already negative impact of the current global economic crisis.

The seizure yesterday of a Greek vessel in the Gulf of Aden is yet another reminder of the menace of

piracy despite the measures that have been put in place to address the problem. While measures such as naval patrols have checked the incidents of attacks, the latest seizure demonstrates once again that the ultimate solution to the problem of piracy lies in supporting and enabling Somalia to regain its standing as a sovereign entity with working institutions having the capacity to enforce law and order, rein in pirates on its territory and provide basic services to the Somali people.

In all these areas, be it in peace and political processes under way in Somalia or in helping with the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the rebuilding of State institutions and the fight against piracy, AMISOM has been playing a vital role. We believe it could do even more in these areas to assist the people of Somalia if it is strengthened. We are therefore encouraged that a support package is being put in place that will enable AMISOM not only to sustain its operations but also to attain its full authorized strength so that it can better fulfil its mandate.

Finally, the Somali people have suffered long enough. The initiatives aimed at reconciliation and political accommodation pursued by President Ahmed deserve our full support. However, we — as the international community or as neighbours — can only do so much. Ultimately, the responsibility for bringing lasting peace and stability to Somalia rests squarely with the Somali people themselves. We therefore urge all Somalis, of all shades of opinion and belief, to give peace a chance, to forget the past and to look to the future in rebuilding the country.

Uganda has circulated a draft statement to the press that we hope can meet with the consensus of the Council, but we welcome any input by Council members.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by expressing my thanks to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his briefing this morning. I wish also to welcome the presence of Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and to thank Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, for his statement.

In Somalia we are witnessing one of the world's most tragic humanitarian crises and one of the most challenging political situations for the international community. There have been no easy solutions for the

crisis in Somalia. The situation requires a holistic approach which, it is now clear, must take account of the complexity of the problem and make use of a variety of tools to overcome this unique crisis.

This also requires the cooperation of all segments of Somalia society who are committed to the Djibouti process and the firm support of the international community. Together, we must seek to broaden the base of the Djibouti agreement, involving the largest possible number of stakeholders who are now outside the process, as President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed has been doing.

Those are difficult factors in settling the Somali crisis; they will certainly demand the commitment of national and international actors for many years to come. The task of establishing broad-based legitimate political institutions is urgent; it is a *sine qua non* for moving forward on the path to overcoming the crisis in Somalia, which will be possible only on the basis of a long-term strategy embracing the humanitarian, political, security and development facets of the Somali crisis.

Here, we welcome as a step in the right direction the election of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as President of Somalia and the subsequent appointment of Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke as Prime Minister. We are confident that they will both be able to enjoy sufficient legitimacy to foster an inclusive political process, which can contribute to reconciliation and lay the foundations for national reconstruction.

The precarious security situation in Somalia is a matter of concern for my delegation, in particular when we consider the increase in attacks on personnel of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We hope that progress in implementing resolution 1863 (2009) and carrying out measures to strengthen AMISOM will lessen the Mission's vulnerability and enhance its effectiveness in the field. In that connection, we support the Secretary-General's appeal to the international community, with a donors conference in view, to support current activities aimed at the establishment of a joint security force in Somalia.

My delegation condemns attacks against the civilian population and regrets the increased number of civilian deaths, many of whom have died when caught in the crossfire in attacks directed against AMISOM. It is urgent that all endeavours to ensure free access of

humanitarian assistance and to improve the safety and security of humanitarian personnel — who are helping more than 3 million people in Somalia, who are dependent on this aid — continue. We remind all parties to the conflict that they are obliged to abide by the provisions of international law, in particular international humanitarian law. Fighting impunity is a high priority because of continued human rights violations, the blocking of humanitarian assistance, attacks on international staff distributing aid and ongoing attacks against the civilian population. It must be part of the strategy to put an end to the crisis in Somalia.

My delegation recognizes the will of African countries to strengthen AMISOM. We support the Mission's work; it is a vital element in bringing stability to Somalia and creating a space in which dialogue and reconciliation efforts can continue.

Finally, I express our satisfaction at the progress in cooperative efforts to combat piracy off the Somali coast, especially because of the importance of those efforts in ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We hope that the international community's commitment to address the crisis brought about by the proliferation of piracy will heighten the attention the international community must devote to addressing the root causes of the crisis in Somalia and to fostering efforts to achieve peace.

Mr. Ilkin (Turkey): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing. I welcome among us the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia and thank him for sharing his views with us. My thanks go also to the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

We welcome the Secretary-General's reports on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/132) and on combating piracy (S/2009/146). Both reports indeed contain detailed and useful information about ongoing developments in the country. I shall limit my remarks on three topics based on those reports.

The first is on the political developments. Turkey welcomes the election of the new President. Likewise, we welcome the appointment of the Prime Minister and his new Government. Turkey has been supporting the Djibouti peace process and hopes that the recent developments herald a better and brighter future for the war-torn people of Somalia. We would like to see

formation of a unity government as a sign of the willingness of the Somali people to shape the destiny of their own country.

That said, at this critical moment, it is also our duty as friends of Somalia to underline the serious difficulties awaiting the new Government. However, while doing so, we should be careful not to create an unnecessarily pessimistic mood in and about Somalia which could be counter-productive. Indeed, the unprecedented challenges and difficulties that lie ahead for the Government of Somalia cannot be ignored or denied. It is exactly for this reason that we have to empower the new Government with our support and assistance so that it can address these challenges. For that, first and foremost, it needs financial assistance.

In return, the new Government should take rapid and effective steps towards the implementation of the Djibouti agreement through national reconciliation and political dialogue. It has to pursue an outreach policy vis-à-vis the other groups with a view to including them in this process to the extent possible.

In the short and medium term, with the support of partners and friends, it should have proper security and police forces. Moreover, sustainable programmes to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate should be implemented. Since the Government cannot operate on donations and foreign assistance, it has to seek means to generate revenues for the immediate expenses of the State. Swift action is also required for the rehabilitation or the re-establishment of judicial and corrections systems in Somalia. Human rights violations and other humanitarian issues, especially impunity, have to be addressed.

For the Government to achieve the targets on its agenda, it has to feel itself secure. This brings me to my second point, which is about the need for regional and international peacekeeping operations. Turkey highly commends the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for its contribution to peace and stability in Somalia. We praise the dedication and the courage of the Ugandan and Burundi forces, who are serving peace under most difficult conditions. They deserve our full support.

Turkey was one of the sponsors of resolution 1863 (2009), which envisaged the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, subject to a further decision of the Council. Turkey sincerely hopes that this deployment would materialize

soon. Yet, developments show that we might face certain delays. We may have to rely solely on AMISOM for some time to come. Therefore, it becomes imperative not only to enhance the capabilities of AMISOM forces, but also to provide the funds that AMISOM needs. In that sense, Turkey welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to convene a donors conference for the establishment of a trust fund. Turkey will contribute to the fund.

The third point I would like to mention relates to the acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia, which continue to be a source of concern for the international community. In order to operate in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea, the Turkish Government has allocated a frigate with air assets. The frigate has joined the international efforts carried out under Combined Task Force 151, which was recently launched. Turkey is also a founding member of the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, and actively participates in the working groups formed under the Contact Group. Having said that, we should continue to concentrate and cooperate on the elimination of the root causes of piracy, which are embedded in Somalia.

Somalia finally has a unity Government operating from Mogadishu. For that Government to be successful, first and foremost, the people of Somalia should develop full faith in it. We must help the Somali Government develop an image that will gain the confidence of its own people.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the current situation in Somalia (S/2009/132), and we thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, and Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, for their briefings. We welcome the presence of Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and thank him for his statement.

The question of Somalia has persisted for 18 years, during which enormous suffering has been visited upon the people of Somalia, posing a grave threat to the regional situation in the Horn of Africa and constituting a daunting challenge to the international

community. In recent years, with strong support from the United Nations and other international partners, all the Somali parties have strengthened the process of peace talks, which has led to certain positive developments in the situation in the country. But the overall situation in Somalia remains fragile and requires additional efforts by the Somali parties and the international community.

The key to achieving peace in Somalia is to strengthen the country's political foundations. We support the Djibouti peace process and call upon all parties concerned to effectively implement the peace agreement that has been signed.

Once again we congratulate Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed on his election as President of Somalia and we welcome the formation of a new Government. We support the new Somali Government as it works to strengthen the dialogue with various political parties and we call upon all Somali parties to join the process of peace negotiations and political reconciliation. We encourage the new Government promptly to establish effective governing institutions, so that it can exercise authority throughout the territory of the country.

We are highly appreciative of the positive role played by Special Representative Ould Abdallah and we call upon the international community to continue to support the national peace and reconciliation process in Somalia.

A stable and secure environment is needed to achieve peace in Somalia. We are highly appreciative of the excellent work carried out by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in extremely difficult conditions, and we welcome the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council to renew the AMISOM mandate for a further three months. We call upon the international community to continue to provide logistical and financial support for AMISOM.

We condemn all attacks against civilians in Somalia and against AMISOM. We urge all Somali parties to immediately put in place a ceasefire throughout the territory of Somalia and to seek a political settlement. We hope that the joint security and police forces will be put in place as soon as possible, and we call upon the international community to provide the necessary support.

A greater United Nations role is required to achieve peace in Somalia. We endorse the United

Nations support package for AMISOM and welcome the fact that Secretariat sent a technical assessment mission to the area and submitted reports in that connection. We would wish the General Assembly to expedite its consideration of the support package for AMISOM, and we hope that the Secretariat will expedite the establishment of the trust fund. We call upon all countries to continue to provide bilateral assistance to AMISOM.

The Chinese Government recently provided the two major troop contributors to AMISOM — Uganda and Burundi — with 5 million renminbi each for logistic support. China is ready to continue within its means to provide further assistance to the Somalia peace process.

It must not be forgotten that the ultimate purpose of strengthening AMISOM is to create favourable conditions for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The Security Council should meet the long-held expectations of the people of Somalia and of the countries of the African Union by giving favourable consideration to the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in the country. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted in April.

The coming months will be critical for the peace process in Somalia. The Council's actions in that regard will have a long-term impact on the people of Somalia. The Chinese delegation is ready to work with other members to further promote a greater Security Council role on the question of Somalia.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I thank the Secretary-General for his two reports (S/2009/132 and S/2009/146) which focus respectively on the security and piracy situations in Somalia. I also thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah for his detailed briefing. I welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and thank him for his statement. I also welcome and thank the representatives of the African Union and the League of Arab States for their participation in this important meeting of the Security Council.

The past few months witnessed some significant progress in the political process in Somalia, including the election of a new President, the establishment of a newly expanded parliament and the formation of an inclusive Government. We reaffirm our belief that, as

His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia said, peace and security in Somalia can only be achieved through dialogue, negotiation, a willingness to compromise and reconciliation. We welcome the efforts of President Ahmed to make the political process more inclusive by reaching out to various groups in the country.

Despite those encouraging political developments, strengthened by the determination of the people and the leaders of Somalia to promote the implementation of a comprehensive ceasefire, we remain concerned about the volatile security situation, as reflected in a series of attacks against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which led to the death or injury of many peacekeepers. We are also concerned about the humanitarian situation, with more than 3 million Somalis in need of humanitarian assistance and many civilians fleeing their homes to escape the fighting. We strongly condemn all such attacks against AMISOM, humanitarian personnel and civilians, and we call for an immediate end to them.

Having taken stock of the current piracy situation off the coast of Somalia and the complexity of the political and security scene throughout that war-torn country, and while commending the operational efforts of Member States within the framework of the Contact Group on Piracy, we wish to emphasize the need for the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions and the Djibouti peace process. We share the Secretary-General's view that the scourge of piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia can be resolved through an integrated approach that addresses the conflict, the lack of governance and the absence of sustainable livelihoods on land in Somalia. We support his appeal to the international community to provide the resources necessary to help bring durable peace and stability to Somalia. We stress the importance of providing assistance in order to build the capacity of local and regional stakeholders.

We commend AMISOM for its enduring efforts in Somalia under very difficult circumstances. We are mindful that the resources available to AMISOM still fall far short of the requirements for its full deployment and for sustaining its operations. My delegation supports the Secretary-General's intention to convene an international donor conference to solicit contributions to the trust fund for AMISOM.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): We would like to join others in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abadallah, for his briefing. We are also very grateful for all his hard work in Somalia. In addition, we appreciate the intervention by His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

We share the encouragement expressed around the table with respect to the positive political developments in the Djibouti peace process, in particular the election of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as President of Somalia. We hope that his election and, more important, his future actions will encourage those Somali partners still outside the Djibouti process to join in. In that connection, we expect that the determination of President Ahmed, as expressed in his inaugural speech, to reach out to all Somalis will yield concrete results quite soon, thus paving the way for more inclusive political arrangements and genuine national reconciliation. The Council, for its part, will use all its leverage to provide support for the ongoing political process, including by persuading others to join in.

Unfortunately, the security situation does not offer the same encouragement, which makes the recent positive developments on the political track even more vulnerable. Although the worst possible scenario of widespread fighting in the aftermath of the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces did not materialize, the continuing insurgency by Al-Shabaab and the increased targeting of AMISOM troops and humanitarian workers are of the utmost concern.

As for the security options before us, we firmly believe that Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) of 16 January 2009 has offered the only viable and realistic security options available at present, namely, the enhancing of AMISOM and Somali capacity-building, in particular of the joint security and police forces established under the Djibouti peace process. We have fully supported the realism and the gradual nature of such an approach as the basis for our future actions. Also, we find the conclusions of the technical assessment mission — in particular the benchmarks for the eventual peacekeeping operation, as set out in the report (S/2009/132) — helpful in that respect.

Equally, we very much welcome the intention of the Secretary-General, as expressed in the report before

us, to convene a donors conference and set up trust funds for AMISOM and for the capacity-building of Somali institutions. In addition, we wish to express our appreciation to AMISOM, whose troops are operating in extremely difficult conditions, in particular since the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces. We commend the troop-contributing countries Uganda and Burundi for their persistence and offer the hope that others will follow suit in honouring their pledges.

My delegation shares the grave concerns expressed by Council members regarding the effects of the continuing deterioration in security on an already-dire humanitarian situation and on the civilian population. In a situation in which more than 3 million Somalis are in dire need of assistance, humanitarian access should continue to be a priority for the international community as a whole. Furthermore, we find the reports from the field about civilians being at the mercy of all parties involved in the conflict — including the targeted killings of persons linked to the Transitional Federal Government, the Islamic Courts Union, the United Nations and civil society organizations — extremely disturbing.

All parties to the conflict should be held accountable for violations of international humanitarian law, including guarantees for the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid. In that light, we call once again for an end to the culture of impunity. We commend the initiatives by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abadallah, to start the deliberations on the need to set up a mechanism to deal with the issues of justice and reconciliation. We hope to see concrete results from that praiseworthy and much-needed effort in the near future.

Finally, as the latest report of the Secretary-General on piracy (S/2009/146) has reminded us, there remains a critical need to tackle problems in Somalia with a multifaceted approach. My country subscribes to that view, which aims to ensure that the political process, the African Union's peacekeeping efforts, the strengthening of law-enforcement institutions and capacity-building initiatives work in tandem. In conclusion, I would like to mention that the Croatian Government has provided several military officers to join Operation Atalanta in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): Like others, I would like to thank Special Representative Ould Abdallah for his very important and comprehensive briefing. We are also grateful for the excellent reports received from the Secretary-General (S/2009/132 and S/2009/146). We warmly welcome the participation of Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Foreign Minister of Somalia, and we were happy to listen to Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

Austria fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later by the Czech Presidency of the European Union. Our comments are meant to complement that statement.

Despite a difficult political situation, a precarious security situation and an alarming humanitarian situation, Somalis have achieved important progress in the Djibouti peace process. Austria commends that development and congratulates President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed on his election. We support the legitimate Government and the continuation of a political process, which should be as broad-based as possible.

The international community must act now and lend its support to Somali efforts to build security and rule-of-law institutions, as well as to embark on a reconciliation process. The Foreign Minister spoke of all those goals, which we support. For that purpose, we also need to strengthen the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS). We therefore wholeheartedly support the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report in that regard.

A number of resolutions on Somalia have been adopted by the Security Council within the past three months. Those resolutions must be implemented in good faith, including resolution 1844 (2008), which targets those who threaten the peace, security and stability of Somalia.

The security environment and the humanitarian situation also need our utmost attention: 3.2 million people — 43 per cent of Somalia's population — are in need of humanitarian assistance and 1.9 million are in a state of humanitarian emergency. Currently, according to our data, there are over 1 million internally displaced persons. Unfortunately, the progress in the peace process has not yet resulted in an alleviation of that situation.

The human rights situation in Somalia has been of great concern as well, as was rightly noted by the technical assessment mission. Especially worrying is the situation of women, in particular violence against women, as well as traditional harmful practices that are still widespread. In addition, all the reported human rights violations have been committed — or most of them — with total impunity. Austria fully supports the capacity of UNPOS to focus on the incorporation of justice and accountability mechanisms in Somalia, as suggested by the Secretary-General in his report.

Civilians, United Nations staff and, recently, AMISOM personnel as well as staff of local non-governmental organizations have been targeted, abducted and murdered. Austria pays its respect to humanitarian workers who continue to deliver much-needed humanitarian aid. We also thank the troop-contributing countries to AMISOM, Uganda and Burundi, for their continuous commitment and engagement in bringing stability and security to Somalia. We join others in condemning the attacks against AMISOM that we have heard and spoken about today.

Austria fully supports the strengthening of AMISOM. The United Nations support package is an important pillar in that respect. We are therefore looking forward to the Secretary-General's report to be issued in April, which will inform us on the progress in the political process and the security situation on the ground and which will serve as a basis for our future deliberations.

It is very important for the authority and the effectiveness of any international presence in Somalia that obligations under international humanitarian law be fully respected by all sides. The protection of civilians, especially women and children, must be a concern and must be ensured by all parties.

As far as piracy is concerned, it is important not to see it only as a threat to key international shipping lanes, but also as a factor further aggravating the security and humanitarian situation in Somalia. Apart from putting humanitarian supplies at risk, it certainly also plays a role in financing the activities of what one might call spoilers of the stabilization process and particularly illegal flows of arms in violation of the embargo. Austria therefore stresses the importance of focused activities to curb piracy in the region and of course as a member of the European Union (EU) we

fully support the EU's naval operation, Operation Atalanta.

We look forward to continuing and intensifying the close cooperation between the international community and Somalia in the interest of Somalia and all of its people.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

At the outset, I wish to express our appreciation to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his valuable briefing. I also wish to thank our brother Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, for his presence and for the information he provided to us today on the situation in Somalia. I also express our thanks to Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, for his valuable briefing.

In the past few months, the leaders of the Somali people have affirmed their determination to emerge from the quagmire of the civil war in which that country has been embroiled for the past 18 years. The parliament was expanded, followed by the election of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as the new President of the country. A Prime Minister was appointed and a Government was then formed and endorsed by parliament. Those are all positive indicators of the parties' commitment to the national reconciliation process under the Djibouti agreement. Dialogue among all parties to the conflict in Somalia and the abandonment of policies of exclusion are the only path to a permanent political settlement.

We believe that the desire of President Sharif to communicate with all parties that oppose the Djibouti process, with whatever their various political views, is a first step in the right direction. For our part, we urge all factions of the Somali population to respond to the call of President Sharif and to adopt a spirit of tolerance and overcome the past in order to spread peace and reconciliation throughout the country.

My delegation welcomes the completion of Ethiopia's full withdrawal from Somalia. We are grateful for the commitment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to continue working under difficult conditions. We urge African Union (AU) member States that have pledged to contribute

troops to make the necessary arrangements to deploy them without delay. We also call upon the international community to provide the resources to enable those States to contribute troops to AMISOM. We hope that the United Nations logistical support package for AMISOM will help to apply United Nations criteria with regard to the participating troops.

The security situation in Somalia is of great concern despite the fact that no major combat operations have taken place since the withdrawal of the Ethiopian forces. The AU Mission has been targeted by repeated attacks, and armed groups still control several areas of the country. That has had a negative impact on the human rights situation and humanitarian conditions.

On the humanitarian front, the continued deterioration of humanitarian conditions in Somalia continues to be of concern. Over 3 million people require humanitarian aid, and the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) continues to increase. The IDPs are not expected to return home anytime soon, while armed groups continue to target humanitarian organizations, whether to loot equipment or to abduct or kill workers. On this occasion, I wish to commend the World Food Programme and its personnel for their courage and for their decision to continue providing humanitarian aid in the southern and central areas of Somalia despite the difficult conditions.

On another front, with regard to the encouraging response of the international community in combating piracy off the Somali coast, we think that piracy is a natural response to the unstable situation in Somalia and cannot be addressed in isolation from the political situation in the country. Combating piracy therefore requires a multidimensional approach based on a political dialogue among all parties, stemming from the Djibouti process and backed by a peacekeeping mission and efforts to revive State institutions and build capacity, in particular relating to law enforcement.

In that regard, we encourage cooperation among States, international organizations and United Nations bodies within the context of international law to combat piracy and we support considering the formulation of a national and regional legal framework to facilitate the arrest and trial of those suspected of committing acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. We affirm the pivotal role of the United Nations in

coordinating the fight against piracy and in providing information, and we urge all Member States to offer information on their efforts to combat piracy.

My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to hold a donors conference in the coming days to collect contributions for the AMISOM trust fund and for building the capacity of Somali institutions. We urge all countries that can to contribute generously. We look forward to the report that the Secretary-General will submit by 15 April on the current situation in Somalia and on the progress made in fully deploying the African Union Mission and in expanding it to become a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

The report will discuss political progress and the security situation on the ground so that the Council can use it in its decision on deploying United Nations peacekeeping forces in Somalia. We also believe that the lack of stability and the security situation must not be used as an excuse to oppose the deployment of a United Nations force in Somalia: United Nations experience shows that deploying United Nations forces to unstable areas has proved to be effective in the past.

Once again, my country's delegation reaffirms its commitment to work towards national reconciliation in Somalia and we assure His Excellency the Foreign Minister — who has informed me that President Sharif may arrive in Libya tomorrow or the day after — that we are in contact with all parties and factions. Libya is the only State that for years has had an embassy in Somalia. We have set up a hospital in Djibouti to treat wounded Somalis and we continue to offer food and medical aid. We have provided hundreds of scholarships to Somali students, the Tripoli University has produced many Somali graduates, including President Sharif. We will continue to offer aid to the Government, including vehicles, administrative tools and equipment, and we will work with the AU and the League of Arab States in that area.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Kaiser (Czech Republic): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the

Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me begin by thanking Mr. Ould Abdallah, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing. I would also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, and thank him for his contribution to today's debate.

During the past two months, the Djibouti peace process has generated a new scenario for Somalia with opportunities for an inclusive political solution. The EU welcomes the expansion of the transitional parliament, the election of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, followed by the appointment of the Prime Minister, Omar Sharmarke, and his Cabinet. The EU encourages President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and Prime Minister Omar Sharmarke to continue their efforts to achieve a cessation of hostilities and to create an inclusive peace process involving all parties to the conflict. Such a process must also give women a voice. The EU welcomes the intention of the President to reach out to those groups that remain opposed to the Djibouti process.

The EU looks forward to working with the President, the enlarged Transitional Federal Parliament and the Government of national unity in their endeavours and will continue to support the political process as it takes on challenges and opportunities to further consolidate reconciliation, to restore peace for all the Somali people and to rebuild the country.

Despite positive developments at the political level, the situation on the ground remains extremely volatile. Security constraints continue to hamper humanitarian operations across Somalia and have led to a wave of attacks on humanitarian workers, peacekeepers and human rights defenders, with the civilian population bearing the brunt of the casualties. The European Union acknowledges that the support of the international community to the Somali Joint Security Force and the Somali Police Service is key.

In that context, the EU condemns the attack of 22 February on AMISOM, leading to the death of 11 Burundian peacekeepers and injuries to others, and those against humanitarian workers. The humanitarian situation remains critical. More than 3 million people

in Somalia still need humanitarian assistance. The acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia remain a source of real concern to the Somali people and, in particular, to the millions who depend on the assistance transferred to Somalia by sea by the World Food Programme.

The EU welcomes the Secretary-General's recommendations contained in his comprehensive report (S/2009/132). The Security Council has expressed, in resolution 1863 (2009), its intent to establish a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia as a follow-on force to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), subject to its further decision by 1 June 2009. In any case, in the upcoming months, AMISOM, as well as Somali security institutions, will continue to play an important role in ensuring security, stability and law and order and in supporting the political process and facilitating humanitarian activities. That is why both the reinforcement of AMISOM and the establishment of an effective Somali security sector should be supported, as widely as possible, by the international community. In that regard, the European Union supports the requests contained in Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) to provide a United Nations logistical support package to support AMISOM and to establish a trust fund.

Through its Joint Strategy Paper 2008-2013, the European Union continues to ensure medium- to long-term assistance to Somalia. Priority is given to promoting a peaceful and secure environment, human rights, democratic processes and institution-building. The European Community's support programme for the same period amounts to €215 million, with good governance, security, education, economic development and support of livelihoods as priority sectors.

With regard to support for AMISOM, the European Commission has so far committed a total of €40 million. Recognizing the need for immediate actions in favour of the Somali security sector, financial support from the European Commission and EU member States to the civilian Somali Police Force will also continue, through the United Nations Development Programme, under its Rule of Law and Security Programme and/or through other new channels, such as the African Union and AMISOM.

In February, the African Union requested that the European Union financially support the immediate and

short-term needs of the AMISOM police component. The European Commission is, in principle, open to contributing through the African Peace Facility.

The direct engagement of the European Union in the fight against piracy started in September 2008, when it completed the actions launched by some European member States in November 2007, which continued until 8 December 2008, when they were replaced by a naval operation, Operation Atalanta. In accordance with the provisions of resolution 1846 (2008), Operation Atalanta focuses on three primary tasks: first, the protection of World Food Programme shipping providing assistance to Somalis dependent on humanitarian assistance; secondly, the escort of some of the most vulnerable vessels in the area of responsibility; and thirdly, to the utmost extent possible, the deterrence and repression of acts of piracy through surveillance and patrolling in the maritime areas where the pirates have proved to be most active.

However, suppressing piracy off the coast of Somalia can only be achieved by addressing the root causes of the problem, which the instability and the lack of rule of law and good governance, and by assisting the development of the capacities of the State of Somalia.

Operation Atalanta currently has a strength of some 1,000 personnel from 12 member States. The naval force is currently comprised of five frigates provided by France, Germany, Greece, Spain and Italy. Helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft were made available by France and Spain. One more Spanish warship is expected to join the operation soon, as are three Swedish ships in May. In August, Norway will deploy a frigate, and the Netherlands and Belgium will deploy their frigates in the second semester of 2009. Other contributors such as Croatia, Ukraine and Switzerland are also considering possible contributions.

The European Union operation is commanded by a British admiral from multinational headquarters in Northwood, United Kingdom. That headquarters is also the location for the Maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa, a joint enterprise between the EU military operation and the shipping industry, which is helping to ensure the most effective interaction with the industry and the widest possible application of agreed best practice, thus minimizing risk.

The EU operation is effectively fighting piracy together with other countries that have deployed their naval units in the Gulf of Aden and that work with Combined Task Force 151, operating in the area, as well as countries of the region.

The EU Secretary-General and High Representative, Javier Solana, stated, in his letter addressed to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, that the European Union is ready, through its naval Operation Atalanta, to contribute, within its means and capabilities, to the protection at sea of the United Nations vessels delivering the logistical support package to AMISOM. In this context, it is very important for the European Union to continue to have an operational contact point in the Secretariat in New York, in addition to the focal point of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia in Nairobi.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that the international community should continue to support the political process in Somalia. This support should be complemented by the efforts of Somalis themselves, who are ultimately responsible for the achievement of full national reconciliation. The EU stands ready to continue to assist Somalia. The EU is, *inter alia*, currently working on a comprehensive and coherent approach towards the Horn of Africa, including the regional dimension of the situation in Somalia.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the representative of Norway.

Ms. Enge (Norway): I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to speak, and I thank His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Somalia, Special Representative Ould Abdallah and African Union Commissioner Lamamra for their briefings earlier.

The past few months have brought about remarkable changes in Somalia. We have seen broad-based reconciliation emerge from the Djibouti process. We have seen a peaceful leadership transition by constitutional means. And we have not seen the instability and increased violence that many feared would erupt after the Ethiopian troops pulled out. Violence has diminished, Mogadishu is more peaceful, the new leadership is back in the capital and people have started, tentatively, to return to their homes.

This is a commendable achievement by the Somali people and their leaders, and we are encouraged by their progress. We would also like to

recognize the efforts of Special Representative Ould Abdallah and his staff at the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, a steady source of inspiration in finding compromises to push the process forward.

We are encouraged, but we know there is still a long way to go. The new Somali leaders are facing tremendous challenges. The security situation is still tenuous. Humanitarian needs are overwhelming. Human rights and impunity are major concerns, and the reconciliation process must continue to move forward. The list of achievements has grown, but so have people's expectations. Somalis at home and abroad are eager to see a peace that will bring not only protection, but also a more prosperous future.

We know that there are still groups and elements in the country that are prepared to use violent means to overturn the achievements that have been made. This includes attacks on African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers. Such attacks can only be condemned in the strongest terms. We pay tribute to the peacekeepers from Burundi and Uganda, who stay on in spite of extremely difficult circumstances.

The international community must stand together in supporting the new Somali leadership against the elements that try to destroy the peace process. Norway supports the Security Council decision to establish a trust fund for support to AMISOM. We agree on the need for a donors conference to solicit contributions for the fund and for the capacity-building of Somali institutions, including the Joint Security Force and the Somali Police Force.

But peacebuilding requires more than establishing the instruments to deal with immediate threats to security. The new leadership must continue its efforts to reach out to those groups that are still not part of the peace and reconciliation process.

It is also of utmost importance that the leadership be able to respond to the people's needs for basic services by providing safe access for humanitarian assistance and by focusing on recovery and reconstruction. For the past few years, Norway has committed approximately \$35 million annually to Somalia. As co-founders of the International Contact Group on Somalia and chair of the friends of Somalia group, we will continue to be actively engaged in responding to the needs of the people of Somalia.

Off the coast of Somalia, we are pleased to see that the international community has stepped up its efforts to safeguard the sea lanes. In the Council, in December, Norway pledged to contribute to these naval operations (S/PV.6046). I can confirm that Norway will send one of its new frigates to participate in the European Union Operation Atalanta. The preparation for the deployment of the vessel in August this year is well under way.

Norway participates actively in the international Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, and we commend the United States for its initiative to establish that Group. We look forward to the continued discussions in the Group on key issues such as enhanced coordination and close cooperation in order to bring to justice those who commit acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea.

A sustainable solution to the piracy problem can only be found through a comprehensive approach in which the Somali authorities, including the regional government in Puntland, have to play a key role. For this reason, it might be useful to establish closer cooperation and coordination between the current operations at sea and the authorities on land, especially with regard to coastal surveillance.

The new President and his Government should know that the international community is ready to fully cooperate with the new leadership. But we know that the challenges during the remaining two years of the transition period will be enormous. We will follow developments in the coming months closely, and we stand ready to offer our advice and support whenever needed.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Zainuddin (Malaysia): Mr. President, let me at the outset express how pleased we are to see you preside over our meeting today, and we thank you for allowing us to participate in it.

We wish to welcome Foreign Minister Omaar here today and congratulate him on his appointment. We wish to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his presentation.

We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Somalia (S/2009/132) and his report pursuant to the Security Council resolution

1846 (2008) (S/2009/146). My delegation noted the positive developments highlighted in the two reports. We warmly welcome the strong commitments by the international community to persevere in the efforts to resolve the situation in Somalia. But despite these developments, there remain many more challenges that need to be addressed.

Malaysia condemns the acts of piracy and armed robberies at sea off the coast of Somalia. The situation is a serious threat to the flow of global maritime trade. It endangers the lives of crew members on board the hijacked or attacked ships. The situation also causes serious impediments to conveyance of international humanitarian assistance to Somalia and of the projected supplies of United Nations assistance to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Malaysia was directly drawn to the situation of piracy off the coast of Somalia when three Malaysian-flagged ships were hijacked in the Gulf of Aden between August and December of 2008. We dispatched five Royal Malaysian Navy vessels to the Gulf of Aden in rotation. The objective then was to render the necessary assistance in the effort to seek the release of the hijacked Malaysian ships. Currently, the Malaysian Navy provides escort and necessary security coverage to other Malaysian-flagged vessels plying the sea in the area. Malaysian Navy vessels have also provided security to vessels of other countries upon request and have been successful in thwarting a couple of attempts by pirates to board and hijack such foreign vessels.

Malaysia had raised serious concerns to the international community over the piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. We raised the issue during the general debate at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly and also during the meeting of our Foreign Minister with the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, in September of last year. Malaysia urged the international community to immediately and collectively formulate concrete steps and a framework of cooperation to address the problem. With this position in mind, we joined other States in co-sponsoring resolution 1846 (2008) in particular.

Malaysia welcomes the anti-piracy operations undertaken by Member States and regional and international organizations, and in particular welcomes the collaborative efforts by neighbouring littoral States in that endeavour. We firmly believe, however, that the United Nations should take a leadership role, including

through establishing a United Nations naval force to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia.

We share the view that, fundamentally, the long-lasting solution to the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia can be achieved only with political stability, the prevalence of the rule of law and an improved socio-economic situation in the country. Therefore, the counter-piracy action should be carried out in a holistic manner that involves political solutions and reform of the security sector and in the economic and human rights spheres in Somalia.

Finally, let me reiterate Malaysia's continued readiness to work and cooperate with others in the international efforts to resolve the scourge of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia and in the resolution of the overall situation in Somalia.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Samir Hosni, Director of African Administration and the Afro-Arab Cooperation Department of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Hosni (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the Foreign Minister of Somalia, Mr. Omaar, and Mr. Ould Abdallah and Mr. Lamamra for the detailed statements that they have given. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and members of the Security Council, for giving me this opportunity to address the Council on the situation in Somalia.

This statement comes at a critical and promising juncture in the peace process that has been ably led by Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, with the active participation of the African Union and the League of Arab States and the clear support of the international community. In this context, allow me to briefly make the following observations.

First, while the Arab States welcomes the important measures that have been taken to implement the Djibouti agreement that was signed last August — the most important of which is the formation of an expanded parliament and the extension of the transitional period for the work of Somali institutions, as well as the election of Mr. Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as President and the formation of a national unity Government under Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali

Sharmarke's leadership — at the same time it affirms the urgent need to offer tangible support for this process at the political, financial and material levels.

We are facing a truly positive development that must be sustained with the necessary capacity to implement all of these changes. Therefore, we reaffirm the need urgently to offer all forms of financial and logistic support to the Somali Government so that it can establish effective State institutions and implement its programmes for reconciliation, security and stability and provide basic services for the Somali people.

Despite the fact that the Arab League is neither a donor nor a financial organization, it responded to the call by the African Union Peace and Security Council and transferred last week \$1 million to the Somali Government's account so that it could start establishing the Joint Security Forces as stipulated in the Djibouti agreement — to be comprised of 10,000 troops — for the purposes of maintaining law and order and to guarantee the sustainability of the current Somali institutions. The Arab summit to be held at the end of this month in Doha, the capital of Qatar, will have on its agenda support for the newly formed Somali institutions.

Secondly, we welcome, support and reaffirm the positive direction that the Somali national unity Government has taken in terms of actively seeking national reconciliation with all factions of Somali society, domestically and abroad. We urge all Somali factions to renounce violence and reconsider their positions and join the march towards Somali national reconciliation.

Thirdly, we also welcome the efforts of and the role played by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and we call for offering it the urgent logistic and financial support it needs so that the African Union (AU) can increase the size of the Mission to the authorized size, namely, 8,000 troops.

We strongly condemn the recent attacks against AMISOM's personnel, which have led to the deaths of 12 peacekeepers from Burundi and have wounded 17 other peacekeepers, not to mention the numerous Somali civilian casualties. We highly commend the AMISOM forces, who work under very difficult conditions in Somalia, and we call on all parties to offer support to those who work on behalf of us all, the international community, to establish peace and stability in the country.

Fourthly, we join the request of the African Union to deploy a United Nations peacebuilding force in Somalia. The Security Council must respond to the strong, shared desire of the Government of Somalia, the AU and the Arab League for continued support to AMISOM and build upon it and authorize the United Nations to take over responsibility for peacekeeping in Somalia at an early stage.

Fifthly, I reaffirm the organic link between piracy, on the one hand, and the Somali question in general, on the other. This issue forces us to seriously consider the best and most effective way to support efforts to establish peace and stability in Somalia, especially after Somali parties succeeded in the implementation of the Djibouti agreement. We, the international community, must show adequate support for them and protect the achievements that have been made towards peace in Somalia. We must also prevent any regression in efforts towards a settlement; that could have negative effects in the political and security spheres which would be very grave indeed if, God forbid, they should take place.

Finally, the reconstruction of Somalia must be at the top of the international community's agenda. For our part, at the Arab regional level, the League of Arab States, in coordination with the African Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations, will this year convene a conference on the reconstruction of Somalia. At that conference, the Somali Government will present its development plans and the necessary feasibility studies. The Arab States and Arab investment funds will participate in the conference; we hope indeed that everybody will participate.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, has asked to make a statement in response to comments made. There being no objection, I give him the floor.

Mr. Omaar (Somalia): I wish first, on behalf of my Government and my people, to express our gratitude for the deep sympathy and appreciation that all participants have shown for the Somali people in the circumstances that currently prevail. I think that the international community and the Somali people are in partnership not only on the issues of Somalia but on those related to the subregion as well.

Essentially, I believe, the Somalis have delivered part of what they can do. On the political aspects, we have responded — and I think we have delivered. It is 30 days since the Government was put together. It will be another 30 days before the pledging conference for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). That means that 60 days will have gone out of the 100-day target we have set ourselves: we will be left with only 40 days. I therefore want to reinforce the urgency and immediacy of the situation.

Finally, I want to say that we have a balance sheet. In our view, we have four points on the plus side and four points on the minus side. On the plus side we have political will; we have public momentum; we have 3,300 joint security forces that are ready in terms of human resources; and we have the willingness and the receptivity of the international community and the regional countries. Those are the four pluses.

The four points on the minus side are these: we have the spoilers who so far reject peace and stability; we have piracy; we have a lack of resources; and we have the past failures to deal with, in terms of both history and perception.

We can do nothing about the past. We are not responsible for that, and for that reason we ask the Council not to place us in a chicken-and-egg situation. We are living in the present, and we need the Council's urgent assistance to enable us to meet the targets for the 100 days. This is a dynamic situation, yet we believe we can establish peace and bring more people on board and into the peace process. But we need urgent attention, in parallel, to AMISOM and to our security forces.

If we can get to that benchmark, I think the next meeting will be far more positive.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and would ask him to be concise in his remarks.

Mr. Ould Abdallah: I will be brief. I wish first to offer a point of information. It is my understanding that the conference for the mobilization of resources for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali security forces, about which we have been talking, will be held on 22 April in Brussels, subject to confirmation with all members. That is because of logistical and a number of other considerations.

Secondly, I thank the Council for its renewed interest and concern with respect to the tragedy of Somalia, especially its rejection of permanent blackmail by a number of Somalis who know how eager we in New York are to look at the headlines and websites: one grenade makes a huge difference; one mortar shell makes a huge difference. I do not like to compare today's world hot spots with Somalia, but if we look at the statistics of the number of deaths, which are terrible, Somalia is in a difficult position, but the situation is not as bad as it might be. It is permanent blackmail that I am talking about, and we should free ourselves from that permanent blackmail.

We are talking about people, and they need peace. They are ready for peace. We will look to the April report to provide accurate figures. We will be in the field; my deputy was in Mogadishu last week.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the delegation of the United States of America for

mentioning the negative role of Eritrea. Somalia has no border with Eritrea. I am a civil servant, but, like members of the Council, I have seen the report with a call by a Government which is normally friendly — the two countries are members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and they have no common border — inviting the destabilization of this country. That needed to be noted, and I am grateful to the United States delegation for having spoken of it. Many members of the Council have told me the same thing, and I hope that it will be raised next time. I do not want it to be made into an issue, but it has to be raised.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. A statement to the press by the President regarding this meeting will be issued.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.